



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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March 24 Oregon Employment Department Media Statement

Economic update

Yesterday, the Oregon Employment Department released the latest [state unemployment rate and jobs numbers](#).

Oregon's unemployment rate was 4.0% in February, down from 4.2% in January. Oregon's unemployment rate was similar to the U.S. rate (3.8%) for the month. Oregon's labor force continued to grow in February to a record high of 2.175 million people, and more Oregonians found jobs.

Overall, Oregon employers added 12,300 jobs last month, and no broad sector of Oregon's economy experienced large job losses. Oregon's leisure and hospitality employers added 3,500 jobs, the most of any sector. Construction gained 2,300 jobs, private health care and social assistance gained 1,600 jobs, and professional and business services employment gained 1,200 jobs.

Oregon has regained 86% of the jobs it lost in spring 2020, compared with 90% jobs regained for the U.S. as a whole.



The Modernization Project remains on schedule and on budget

The Employment Department's modernized computer system is on schedule to launch in September 2022. The new system is called Frances Online, named in honor of Frances Perkins, the U.S. Secretary of Labor from 1933 to 1945 and the first woman to serve in a presidential cabinet.

The first phase of Frances Online will replace the Oregon Payroll Reporting System (OPRS) to support combined payroll reporting, including Unemployment Insurance taxes, the Workers' Benefit Fund, State Withholding Taxes, Lane and TriMet Transit Taxes. The current timeline for rolling out Frances Online is:

- **September 2022** – Frances Online replaces OPRS for combined payroll reporting.
- **January 2023** – Frances Online supports the Statewide Transit Tax and contributions to the Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance trust fund.
- **September 2023** – Customers begin using Frances Online to apply for and receive paid leave benefits from the Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance program.
- **March 2024** – Customers begin using Frances Online to apply for and receive unemployment insurance benefits.

“Our dedicated planning and hard work are paying off,” said Acting Director David Gerstenfeld. “It’s exciting to be at this phase of the project after the extensive and comprehensive oversight process. All the steps are in place to make sure we’re creating a system that will truly support the people and businesses of Oregon.”

Currently, the Employment Department's Modernization team is conducting focus groups with employers and third-party administrators to make sure the system is as user friendly as possible. All employers and third-party administrators are welcome to participate. Those interested should contact the Modernization team at employment.modernization@employ.oregon.gov.



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